

**Department of Mental Health  
Employment Plan for FY 2004**  
*(Strategic Plan Key Outcome Objective 4B)*

**Introduction**

Consumers of the Department of Mental Health want to work, and many of them are capable of working. Employment boosts self-esteem, provides a sense of purpose and accomplishment, and promotes independence. Because of related functional limitations and the social stigma placed on people with disabilities, this population has continuously struggled with barriers to employment and access to community services.

DMH policies for consumer employment promote a community approach that integrates clinical and vocational/supported employment services. State-level partnerships should exist between DMH, consumer advocacy organizations, and agencies providing employment programs, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Development Boards, etc. Regional and local partnerships between employment service entities, DMH community-based providers, and state-operated facilities should be formed in areas where they currently do not exist or are not operating as efficiently as they could be.

In order to facilitate productive working relationships between DMH and employment entities and thereby increase employment among people with disabilities served by the Department, the three divisions have designated staff to participate on a *DMH Employment Team*. Team members are responsible for implementing the Employment Plan and monitoring progress throughout the year.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a primary partner for DMH since their mission is to serve individuals with disabilities. The Divisions of CPS and MRDD transfer \$1 million annually to VR to provide enhanced support services to DMH consumers. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has designated a staff person to serve as liaison between the two agencies. The DMH Employment Team meets regularly with VR's liaison to strengthen this working relationship and collaborate on new federal employment initiatives that will benefit DMH consumers.

It is the intent of the Employment Team to not only continue the working relationship with VR, but to strengthen or form new partnerships with other consumer advocacy groups and state and local agencies that can play a role in enhancing employment outcomes for DMH consumers.

**Department of Mental Health  
Employment Plan – Fiscal Year 2004**

GOAL	DISCUSSION	ACTION STEPS	STAFF RESPONSIBLE	TARGET DATES		COMPLETED	ACCOMPLISHMENTS
<b>Goal #1:</b> Collect data in order to measure progress on the number of DMH consumers who are employed or receiving vocational services.	Measuring the number of DMH consumers who are gainfully employed in order to establish a baseline has been difficult due to variances in the way data is reported, timeliness of the data, consumer populations for which data is available, etc. It is important to note that in order to accurately capture this data, common definitions, populations, and collection methods need to be established. Employment would also need to be incorporated as a status measure by all DMH service providers. In the current fiscal climate and with staff limitations, it is not feasible to implement or require such data collection activities. In order to begin to monitor trends and gain an idea of how many DMH consumers are in the labor force, Interagency Agreements have been established with the Division's of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Development to conduct data matches.	A. Data match SSN's of DMH clients with Divisions of Workforce Development and VR records.  B. Analyze VR match to determine the number of DMH consumers served as well as successful closures.  C. Division of Workforce Development data will be analyzed to determine percentage of adults served by DMH who work in competitive employment during or after DMH services (by fiscal year) and percentage making wages above the federal poverty level for a family of four.	Debbie McBaine Karen Battjes Nancy Nickolaus John Harper	<u>Start</u> 6/1/02	<u>Complete</u> 12/31/02		The data match with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has been successful in showing the number of DMH consumers who are also served by that agency. The results of FFY '02 match were presented to Div. Directors on 9/9/03. Results show that 12,898 DMH clients were also served by VR.  Data from the Division of Workforce Development is not yet automated which has made this match more time consuming and difficult to develop regular reports in order to develop findings. Steps are being taken to automate this data during the current fiscal year.
				10/1/03 (2 <sup>nd</sup> match)	12/31/03		
				Ongoing			

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<b>Goal #2:</b> Provide and Coordinate Training/Educational Opportunities for Consumers, Providers, DMH Staff	ADA, CPS, and MRDD providers should be provided with ongoing training and educational opportunities in the area of employment and vocational supports in order to improve consumer outcomes in this area. Cross-training is important due to the number of consumers served by all three divisions.	A. The Spring Training Institute includes a track on “Full Community Membership” each year in keeping with the Department’s Vision, Mission, and Values. This includes sessions on employment and vocational services to assist providers in enhancing this aspect of their programming.	Debbie McBaine	9/1/03	5/21/04		Training on the <i>Ticket to Work</i> program was held in Jefferson City on December 3, 2002. Over 400 participants, representing consumers and providers from all three divisions, were in attendance. Presentations were also provided by Charles Bentley, DFS, on the Medicaid Spenddown and Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities; John Ryan, VR, on Missouri activities related to the Ticket program; and staff from the SSA’s Benefits Planning Assistance Outreach Program.
	It is important for the Department to collaborate and strengthen relationships with other entities including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Division of Workforce Development, Workforce Investment Boards, and Career Centers in order to expand employment opportunities for DMH consumers.	B. Consult with the Division of Workforce Development representative on the Employment Advisory Committee to explore ways to enhance DMH’s working relationship with them and their Career Center Network as well as participating as presenters/exhibitors in the 2004 Workforce Development Conference.	Debbie McBaine Nancy Nickolaus	11/1/03	3/1/03		The 2003 Spring Training Institute featured a nationally known expert in the area of employment and vocational services and supports for people with disabilities. Staff and providers from ADA, CPS, and MRDD, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and other state agencies attended these sessions.
		C. Employment Team members will continue to educate their respective service providers about the Department’s goal to increase employment outcomes for its consumers and the correlation between employment and successful outcomes. This will be accomplished through on-site training, regional training, provider meetings, etc.	Team	Ongoing			
		D. Employment Team will meet regularly with VR staff liaison. The Employment Advisory Committee will be utilized on an Ad Hoc basis to assist with specific aspects of employment programming as well as providing regular input on the Employment Plan.	Team	Ongoing			
		E. Provide web-based updates and fact sheet mailings on employment issues to consumers, providers, and staff.	Team	Ongoing			The DMH Employment Plan and other resources have been added to the DMH web site to serve as a resource to consumers and providers.
		F. Facilitate communication and education between local employment/vocational agencies and DMH regional staff to assist consumers in coordination of benefits and work incentive programs.	Team	Ongoing	12/31/02		
		G. Arrange joint training/educational opportunities with staff of VR, Division of Workforce Development, and other entities that can provide employment and vocational services to DMH consumers.	Team	Ongoing			An in-service training model for ADA providers has been developed and is taking place on a regional basis, beginning January, 2004.

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<b>Goal #3:</b> For DMH consumers who want to work and are capable of working, expand the treatment and person-centered planning process to include action steps for employment and career planning.	Employment has not historically been a focus or stated goal for DMH consumers, particularly those receiving substance abuse or mental health treatment services. The standard approach was to address the consumer's addiction or mental illness, and in doing so, it was assumed employment would take care of itself because of the consumer's increased self-esteem and level of functioning. Even in instances where employment was a stated goal of treatment, the needed vocational services were not readily available for all consumers. Because of the importance of employment in the recovery process and in achieving self-sufficiency and a sense of independence, it is imperative that vocational services be incorporated into treatment and habilitation planning. Research indicates that employment before or during treatment predicts both longer retention in treatment and the likelihood of successful outcomes.	A. Continue discussions with service providers, regional centers, etc., to ensure that employment goals are incorporated into the treatment planning and person-centered process.	Team	Ongoing			
		B. Establish a reimbursable unit rate for "Vocational Support" for ADA primary recovery providers.	Debbie McBaine	12/1/03	1/04	1/04	
		C. Design an enhanced model for CPRC that will emphasize a rehabilitation approach with one outcome related to employment.	Karen Battjes				
		D. The "Partners in Employment Project" has been identified as a priority initiative of the MRDD System Breakthrough for Excellence Project and as a result, the following activities will be implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Expand the person-centered planning process to include career planning;</li><li>Implement a pilot project on Employment Role Modeling by Public Entities;</li><li>Implement a pilot project on collaborating with other entities (SB 40 Boards) to increase employment opportunities for consumers.</li></ul>	Nancy Nickolaus				
		E. DD Planning Council will issue a Call for Investment for employment services.	Nancy Nickolaus	10/03			
		F. DD Planning Council will expand its Partners in Policy Making Program to include an "Employment Partners" initiative.	Nancy Nickolaus				
<b>Goal #4</b> Explore and develop employment and vocational options for youth who are transitioning from school to the work environment.	Youth who have disabilities, mental illness, and substance abuse problems and are transitioning from high school to the world of work have historically not received appropriate services to assist them in making this transition successfully.	A. Collaborate and participate in the Missouri Career Network Transition Pilot in Kansas City.	Nancy Nickolaus				
		B. Collaborate with the Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Development to enhance services for transitional youth.	Team	Ongoing			
		C.					
<b>Goal #5</b> Explore and develop	Transportation is a barrier to employment for many DMH consumers, particularly in rural	A. Explore grant opportunities for transportation options for DMH consumers.	Team	Ongoing			

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transportation options for consumers who want to work.	areas.	B. Explore the possibility of partnering with other community resources (such as OATS) to provide transportation services for DMH consumers.  C.					
<b>Goal #6</b> Link Housing and Employment Resources	Housing and employment are both critical elements in achieving successful outcomes for DMH consumers.	A. Collaborate with the Department's Housing Team to assist individuals in obtaining and retaining the housing supports necessary for sustained competitive employment.	Team				
<b>Goal #7</b> Establish Employment Targets for FY '05	Once a baseline is established, target rates for future employment outcomes can be set. This data can be used during the budget process, meeting block grant requirements, etc.	A. Using baseline data, each Division will set employment targets for Fiscal Year 2005.  B. Continued data collection from VR and Workforce Development, and matching with CIMOR data will enable staff to determine whether the Divisions are meeting their target rates and where improvement is needed.  C. Future outcome measurement efforts will include examination of the effects of employment, education, or training facilitated by DMH initiatives on DMH consumer outcomes.	Team				